THE OXFORD ENGLISH-ARABIC DICTIONARY

OF CURRENT USAGE

EDITED BY

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FOREWORD

ALMOST ten years have passed since this dictionary was first mooted and that it has been completed is largely due to the encouragement and help I have received from the publisher and the many scholars who have collaborated. I should like in particular to thank the officers of the Clarendon Press for their understanding and forbearance and the Printer for his readiness to try out the combination of photo-composition and calligraphy.

That the project got off the ground was thanks to the efforts of the late Professor A. J. Arberry, Professor A. F. L. Beeston, A. R. V. Cooper, Professor Sir Godfrey Rolles Driver, J. H. McMillan, D. R. Nicoll, and Professor T. W. Thacker. The Oriental Institute in Oxford generously housed the editorial staff, who were helped in the production of the draft English text by contributions from P. S. Falla, H. S. H. Massey, C. R. K. Perkins, Peter Sutcliffe, Mrs. Josephine Wightwick, and Noel Woodin. The proof-reading of the English and general editorial work were largely done by Mrs. Dorothy Eagle on a part-time basis. For close on two years the project had the services of Vernon Daykin for three days a week, who divided his time between help in the English and checking certain aspects of the Arabic.

The full-time workers who spent over a year on the Arabic text were Mrs. Nawal Amin, Najm Bezirgan, E. A. Everett, and Fuad G. Massa. Fuad H. Megally spent the last five years on the Dictionary as my full time assistant editor. The part-timers who made valuable contributions to the Arabic text were Kamal Abu Deeb, J. Gilchrist, Khalil Helou, Nasir Hillāwi, Peter Lienhardt, H. M. Nahmad, David Patterson, N. G. Sainsbury, Mujahid al-Sawwaf, David Semah, and Sassōn Somekh. The calligraphy of the first thousand pages was done by G. D. Spinney, who had to stop because of ill health. Fuad H. Megally wrote in the modifications of the earlier pages and finished the remaining calligraphy.

In expressing my appreciation for all the help recorded above I must also ask for the reader's indulgence for errors for which I take full responsibility.

N. S. D.

PREFACE

> No Dictionary of a living tongue can ever be perfect, since while it is hastened to publication, some words are budding, and some falling away.
>
> SAMUEL JOHNSON 1755

THE English–Arabic dictionary of current usage is designed to meet the needs of those whose mother-tongue is English and who are learning Arabic, and of those whose mother-tongue is Arabic and who are learning English. The gap between the two languages is so wide that a glossary which confines itself to equating words is as frustrating for the Arab reading an English text as it is for the English speaker trying to convey his thoughts in Arabic. The gap is so wide not only because English and Arabic belong to completely different language families but also because of the differing concepts and values which obtain in the west and the east. It seemed best, therefore, to tackle the problem of bridging the gap by first establishing as solid a platform as possible on one side of the language barrier and then proceeding from there. This meant that the first requirement was for a fresh appraisal of what usage was current in English combined with the creation of a system of conventions for its presentation. Next came the search for Arabic equivalents. In its turn this called for a fresh appraisal of relevant usage current in Arabic and equally the creation of a system of conventions for its presentation.

This fourfold task was further complicated by two major factors inherent in living language which by its nature is constantly changing. Every increase of knowledge and experience produces new words, new connotations of old words, and new combinations of ordinary words. The second factor is that variations in usage occur at the same time both regionally and in different social milieux. Standard English may be divided into *formal literary English*, i.e. the words, expressions, and structures to be found in serious literature; *colloquial English*, i.e. the words, expressions, and structures which are rarely seen in the formal language but which are acceptable in ordinary conversation at all levels of society; and *slang English*, i.e. those words and expressions normally shunned in serious literature and polite conversation but commonly found in the speech of certain social classes or groups. In Arabic the *formal literary usage* is largely the crystallization of the informal but polite conversation of cultivated people many centuries ago. There is also the informal conversation and communication of the educated today as well as the speech of the illiterate. Moreover both in English and Arabic there are regional

uses like 'lift' and 'elevator' on the one hand, and '*ruzz*' and '*tumman*' (both meaning 'rice') on the other.

Since it is the function of the lexicographer to record what is current rather than to lay down the law, the words and phrases of current English at all levels are given their place in the dictionary. The Arabic equivalents, as far as is possible, are given at the same level of usage. In this feature the dictionary is breaking new ground.

The first task was, then, to produce a representative English text so arranged on the page that a specific usage was easy to find. A number of different contributors submitted parts of the alphabet, basing their choice of words and usage on the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, the *Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, and their professional experience as linguists. The separate contributions were then edited by C. R. K. Perkins, who also formulated the conventions to be observed which are given below. This edited version was typed and it was on the typed version that the Arabic text was added in manuscript. At this stage it was frequently found necessary to make changes in the English text in order to provide additional examples of English usage which might well baffle the Arab student. The final text was then prepared for the printer by Mrs. Dorothy Eagle, who consulted with the editor on any doubtful points. The galleys were also checked by Mrs. Eagle and the editor, and occasional alterations as well as corrections were made.

The editing conventions follow. Abbreviations conform for the most part with those used in the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*. Where a word has two or more meanings or shades of meaning a synonym, explanatory phrase or abbreviated indication of context follows the numbered usage in round brackets. Where a subsidiary entry is made to indicate a difference in grammatical function, e.g. an adjective used as a noun or a transitive verb used intransitively, the subsidiary entry is indicated merely by the abbreviation for the relevant part of speech. In those entries where a word has more than one meaning the idiomatic usage appropriate to each meaning is listed immediately after it. In doubtful or difficult cases idioms have been listed together at the end of the entry. In verbal idioms beginning with an infinitive the initial word 'to' is frequently omitted.

Adverbs in '-ly' and abstract nouns in '-ness', formed from adjectives, are normally omitted unless either their formation is irregular or their usage is more frequent than or in some way different from that of the adjective from which they derive, e.g. 'actually'; 'muchness'. Idiomatic usages like 'incidentally' are separately recorded. When adverbial adjuncts form compound verbs they are mostly treated as subsidiary entries under the main verb. Thus 'take away' will be found under 'take'.

Common prefixes like 'in-' do not normally have a separate entry. Words formed with these prefixes, e.g. 'ineffective', appear in their normal

alphabetical order. On the other hand prefixes used exclusively in scientific and technical language are included, if their use is sufficiently wide to warrant their inclusion as an entry in their own right.

The Arabic entries are made in accordance with the conventions generally accepted in the Arab world. Words in brackets are either plural forms, or indications of regional usage, or disciplines, or contextual lubricants. Commas separate words which are near synonyms, it being generally accepted that the concept common to all the given words is the one which is equivalent to the English word. The semi-colon, however, calls for a complete break in thought, since what follows will be the equivalent of a change in concept from what precedes. It may be the equivalent of the intransitive use of a verb which has just been expounded as a transitive, or an explanation, for example, of the slightly pejorative use of a word like 'idealistic'. As Arabic does not use an infinitive form of the verb in the same way as the infinitive is used in English there is a tendency for English infinitive forms to be rendered by imperfects or perfects of the Arabic verb. Generally the objective has been to write down Arabic which is easy on the eye and makes a direct and meaningful impact on the perception of the Arab reader, conveying as fully as possible the wider semantic implications of the English head-word. To achieve this end every entry has been subjected to the scrutiny of one or more scholars whose mother-tongue is Arabic and it is largely thanks to their advice that the Arabic entries are both authentic and up-to-date. On the question of vowels the consensus of opinion has been in favour of writing in as few as possible. In this regard the entries are not consistent but it is hoped that enough vowels have been given to avoid ambiguity.

N. S. D.

1971

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

a./djective
abbr./eviation
absol./ute
abstr./act
adv./erb
aeron./autics
agric./ulture
alg./ebra
anat./omy
arch./aic
archit./ecture
arith./metic
astron./omy
attrib./utive
Austr./alian

bibl./ical
biol./ogy
bot./any

chem./istry
cinemat./ography
coll./oquial
collect./ive
comb./ination
commerc./ial
comp./arative
condit./ional
conj./unction
contr./action
cop./ulative

derog./atory
dial./ect
dim./inutive

eccles./iastical
econ./omics
elec./tricity
engin./eering
entom./ology
esp./ecially
etc./etera
euphem./ism

exc./ept
excl./amation

F./rench
facet./ious
fam./iliar
fem./inine
fig./urative

geog./raphy
geol./ogy
geom./etry
gram./mar

her./aldry
hist./ory
horol./ogy
hort./iculture

imperat./ive
impers./onal
indel./icate
inf./initive
int./erjection
interrog./ative
iron./ical

joc./ular

Lat./in
leg./al
lit./eral
log./ic

magn./etism
masc./uline
math./ematics
mech./anics
med./icine
metall./urgy
metaphys./ics
meteor./ology
mil./itary

miner./alogy
mod./ern
mus./ic
myth./ology

n./oun
naut./ical
nav./al
N.Z., New Zealand

obj./ective
obs./olete
oft./en
opp./osite
opt./ics

parenth./etic
parl./iament
pass./ive
past p., past participle
path./ology
philos./ophy
philol./ogy
phon./etics
photog./raphy
phr./ase
phys./ics
physiol./ogy
pl./ural
poet./ical
polit./ics
pop./ular
poss./essive
pred./icative
pref./ix
prep./osition
pres./ent
pres. p., present participle
pret./erite
print./ing
pron./oun
prov./erbial
psychol./ogy

R.A.F., Royal Air Force
reflex./ive
relig./ion

Sc./otch, Scots, Scottish
sing./ular
sl./ang
subj./ect
suff./ix

sup./erlative
surg./ery

teleg./raphy
theatr./ical
theol./ogy
typ./ography

univ./ersity

U.S., United States
usu./ally

v.aux., verb auxiliary
vbl., verbal
v.i., verb intransitive
v.t., verb transitive
vulg./ar

zool./ogy